

Volusia County Green Ribbon Panel

Background

On April 24, 2008 county staff presented a Smart Growth Workshop to County Council. At this workshop Council directed staff to develop heightened environmental standards for environmentally sensitive areas using Section 202.4 of the County Charter (County Minimum Standards for Environmental Protection).

In the past, revisions to the minimum standards were initiated through the Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC), an ad-hoc committee appointed by the Environmental Management Director. ENRAC was disbanded in 2004 after the adoption of the Water Wise Landscape Irrigation standards. To develop heightened environmental standards as directed by Council, the Environmental Management Director chose to convene a Green Ribbon Panel consisting of 15 individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds and expertise. These panelists will examine the current environmental minimum standards for and make recommendations regarding potential changes.

Relationship to Smart Growth

As part of the Smart Growth initiatives, it is anticipated that the County will adopt Comprehensive plan language stating our intent to adopt regulations, standards, and procedures pursuant to Sec. 202.04 of the Volusia County Charter to apply specific minimum environmental standards to the Environmental Core Overlay to protect it as a functional ecological unit. Specific regulations may include standards for wetlands protection, watershed protection, aquifer protection, and for conservation of habitat of animal species listed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or by federal agencies pursuant to the Endangered Species Act.

In addition it is anticipated that changes to the minimum standards will precipitate corresponding changes to the Land Development Code which shall set forth procedures and standards for implementing these heightened environmental standards.

Role of the Panel

- Serves as advisory panel to Environmental Management to recommend changes to the County environmental minimum standards
- Each member of this committee was appointed by the Environmental Management Director to ensure diverse representation

Fred Costello, Mayor, Ormond Beach

J. Anthony Abbott, Director of Environmental Science, Stetson University

Gerald Fieser, Dairy Farmer

Rosemarie Gore, League of Women Voters

Karyn Hoffman, West Volusia Audubon Society
Joel Ivey, Ivey Planning Group
Candace Lankford, Volusia County School Board
Phil Laurien, Executive Director of the East Central Florida
Regional Planning Council
Betty O'Laughlin, Environmental Council
Glenn Storch, Storch, Morris and Harris
Wanda Van Dam, Concerned Citizen
C. Allen Watts, Cobb and Cole
Tadd Kasbeer, Bowyer-Singleton & Associates, Inc.
Jay and Mo Lawyer, Concerned Citizens
Don Spence, Volusia County Soil and Water Conservation District

Role of the County staff

- Acts as committee moderator
- Provides logistical support including scheduling
- Provides research and information requested by committee members
- Brings ordinance changes forward to County Council

Progress to date

The panel has met 5 times since inception (see www.volusia.org/environmental/greenribbon for details on all the meetings). The focus thus far has been on the wetland minimum standard. We are currently identifying limitations of the standard and ways to provide greater protection to the environmental core as directed by County Council.